extensive knowledge of areas served by them. They have carried out surveys for Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Registrar General of India, checked addresses for Election Commission of India etc. and also collected consumer data for a pilot project for utilization of FMCG products etc., in Hyderabad and Bangalore.

(c) There is no plan at present to undertake the data collection as in the pilot project at Hyderabad and Bangalore throughout the country.

(d) and (e) The utilization of Postmen for carrying out of surveys etc. has been generally welcomed. The database collected pertaining to the cities of Hyderabad and Bangalore has been used by business customers, whenever they required.

Modernisation of Ports

*176. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state the steps taken so far to expand or modernise various ports like Karwar, Bhatkal, Honnavar, Malpe etc.?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): The ports at Karwar, Bhatkal, Honnavara and Malpe are minor ports located in the State of Karnataka. There are six other minor ports in the State, namely, Belikeri, Tadri, Kundapur, Hangarakatta, Padubidri and Old Mangalore.

Under the Indian Ports Act, 1908, the respective State Governments have overall jurisdiction on minor ports and are responsible for their development. The information furnished by the Government of Karnataka on development of minor ports in that State is annexed as Statement.

Statement

Information regarding development of minor ports in Karnataka

The ports of Malpe, Old Mangalore, Karwar, Hangarakatta and Kundapur are having fisheries berths and the following activities are in progress:—

(i) Construction of II Stage Commercial Warf at Old Mangalore port costing Rs. 6 crores.

(ii) Construction of Commercial Wharf at Malpe costing Rs. 160 lakhs.

(iii) Deepening of entry channel at Bhatkal port approved under Assistance to States for Development of Export Infrastructure (ASIDE) scheme for Rs. 79 lakhs.

(iv) Proposal for construction of an exclusive Coke jetty at Belikeri by private investment on Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis (under consideration).

(v) Procurement of dredger for Karwar port approved under ASIDE Scheme.

(vi) The fishing harbour at Gangolli costing Rs. 10.80 crores is nearing completion.

(vii) Karwar port is being provided with ISPS facilities (International Ship & Port Security code) to be in tune with international practice.

(viii) Proposal for increasing Landing & Shipping fees under Karnataka Ports-Landing & Shipping Act is under finalization.

2. An exclusive fisheries port is proposed to be built at Amadalli, south of Karwar at an estimated cost of Rs. 14 crores as part of the rehabilitation and resettlement due to Project Sea Bird.

3. The Government of Karnataka proposes to obtain assistance under ASIDE scheme for upgrading the port facilities at Karwar port.

4. The State Government is also taking up improvement of minor ports under Budgetary grant.

Stem cell research

*177. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have examined the possibility of the country becoming a nucleus of stem cell research; and

(b) if so, the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Madam. Brainstorming meetings on stem cells were organized to identify priorities and to examine the possibilities to enhance research in this area in the country. The main features of strategy include promotion of stem cell research for therapeutic applications using adult and embryonic stem cells as well as other more readily available sources such as bone marrow, peripheral blood and umbilical cord blood cells.